

**Draft Decision: 43 COM 7B.3**

The World Heritage Committee,

1. Having examined Document WHC/19/43.COM/7B.Add,

2. Recalling Decision **41 COM 7B.25**, adopted at its 41st session (Krakow, 2017),  
State of conservation of properties WHC/19/43.COM/7B.Add, p. 11 Inscribed on the World Heritage List,

3. Welcomes the formation of an India-Bangladesh Joint Working Group (JWG) of the Sundarbans and requests the State Party of Bangladesh to keep the World Heritage Centre informed of the concrete actions and outcomes that arise from the JWG and how these will strengthen the long-term protection of the property's Outstanding Universal Value (OUV);

4. Appreciates the confirmation that any future dredging of the Pashur River will be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), reminds the State Party that EIAs should be conducted in line with the IUCN World Heritage Advice Note on Environmental Assessment and include a specific section on the potential impact of the project on the OUV of the property, and also requests the State Party to ensure that any dredging within the property is conducted in compliance with strict conditions that safeguard the property's OUV and further requests the State Party to provide information on dredging activities;

5. Welcomes the State Party's actions, such as the implementation of the integrated freshwater inflow management plan, the implementation of Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART), the development of the Tiger Action Plan (2018-2027) and National Tiger Recovery Programme (NTRP), expansion of the wildlife sanctuaries and the adoption of the Bangladesh Delta Plan 2100 to protect and expand the Sundarbans.

6. Notes with great concern the likely environmental impacts of large scale industrial projects on the property's OUV, and urges the State Party to take all necessary mitigation measures to address the concerns previously expressed by the Committee and the 2016 joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring mission;

7. Expresses concern that 154 industrial projects upstream of the property are currently active, and reiterates the Committee's request in Paragraph 4 of Decision 41 COM B.25 and welcomes the commitment of the State Party to continue the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) requested by the same decision;

8. Requests that the State Party implement the relevant recommendations of the SEA to all current and future projects and recalls the obligation of the State Party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, for review by the Advisory Bodies, detailed information including environmental impact assessments for development projects, which have the potential to influence the OUV of the property before they commence in accordance with Paragraph 172 of the Operational Guidelines before work commences or any irretrievable decision is made;

9. Regrets that the National Oil Spill Chemical and Contingency Plan has still not been finalized, and also reiterates its requests that the State Party ensure adequate provision of funding and human resources for the implementation of the plan once it is adopted, and provide further information and data on the monitoring of long-term impacts from current shipping incidents involving spills of hazardous materials in proximity to the property;

10. Requests the State Party to invite a joint World Heritage Centre/IUCN Reactive Monitoring Mission to the property to assess the state of conservation, in particular to level of threats to the hydrological and ecological dynamics which underpin the OUV of the property and recommends that the mission takes place by the end of 2019;

11. Finally requests the state party to submit to the World Heritage Centre, by **1 February 2020**, an updated report on the state of conservation of the property and the implementation of the above, for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 44<sup>th</sup> session in 2020, so that the Committee can decide on whether or not to inscribe the property on the List of World Heritage in Danger.